

PCCEP STATUS CONFERENCE HEARING STATEMENT

NOVEMBER 9, 2022

I. PCCEP Progress

After months without dedicated staff and consistent feedback around the lack of effective staffing support for PCCEP, the City hired two staff members in July of 2022. One of the new staff's first accomplishments was to fill the remaining vacant seats for PCCEP. Although there are valid concerns about the slow progress in getting PCCEP back on track, a clear work plan has been defined and PCCEP is inching towards meeting goals for compliance. The new, fully-seated PCCEP looks forward to working closely with the community as the City continues to work on its Settlement with the United States.

Looking forward, PCCEP hopes to have more engagement with Judge Simon and the compliance monitoring process. PCCEP continues to be frustrated by the city's failure to respond to PCCEP statements and recommendations. We look forward to finding ways we can share more substantive statements that capture the community's input on the implementation of the Settlement Agreement.

PCCEP is pleased that the city is finally following through with the creation of a truth-and-reconciliation commission designed to address the Portland Police Bureau's historic mistreatment of communities of color. PCCEP requested that this commission be prioritized nearly two years ago and is looking forward to seeing the commission develop.

II. Progress Needed

i. Equity Concerns

PCCEP members are committed to giving the community an inclusive, safe, and equitable public meeting space to share their questions and concerns about the Settlement with the PPB. Recent incidents have emphasized equity concerns of the committee's operations and the need to incorporate a trauma-informed approach. There has been inconsistent access to closed captioning and language interpretation at public meetings. Further, a recent public meeting was held on an

observed Jewish holiday despite community member requests. PCCEP members have made these concerns known to staff and hope to see improvements.

ii. Community Outreach Resources

Now that the most basic support from the Mayor's Office and City staff is finally in place, PCCEP has identified outreach and community engagement as an urgent need, yet one that is not currently being addressed. Members are eager to collect more community input and recognize the past year has not been a good example of that effort. The longstanding community engagement workplan is overdue for review and will benefit from the input of new PCCEP members. PCCEP would like to prioritize the collection and tracking of community input to inform a more comprehensive community engagement work plan. This will require ongoing staff support.

PCCEP is interested in helping answer big community questions, like *"does the City need more or less policing?"* and *"what is the community's overall trust level with the PPB?"* yet we lack the tools to reliably capture public perception on various topics. The City needs to provide PCCEP with the resources necessary to engage the wider community in a comprehensive way. Since this relies heavily on staff support, PCCEP recommends additional allocation of resources in order to conduct more in-person meetings with community groups, including adding an additional staff member whose responsibilities would be to lead community engagement efforts.

III. Concerns with PPB Policy

PCCEP believes trust is foundational if there is going to be any progress toward community-engaged policing. Trust is built on accountability, transparency, and a willingness to do better. At this point in time, PPB, PPA, and City actions and inactions raise concerns that they are not seeking to be responsive to the community, feeding into a lack of trust. Examples include the insufficient remediation of the PPB training slide and presentation, slow progress on implementing body-worn cameras, and the data provided in the stops report.

i. PPB Training

In January 2022, the City Attorney's office revealed the existence of a presentation prepared for the training of RRT (Rapid Response Team) members in 2018ⁱ. This training content included a deeply offensive 'meme' calling for unacceptable use of force against demonstrators. Moreover, the entire slide deck contained racially biased content throughout, and other historically inaccurate information. The Training Division should have reviewed that material as required by PPB Directive 1500.00. PCCEP has concerns about the continued lack of accountability for this incident and the failure to document concrete steps the bureau will take to prevent a future recurrence. Both failures have unfortunate implications for the relationship between PPB and the public.

The City has failed to complete a timely investigation into the delivery of offensive and inaccurate training material without review. This is troubling to PCCEP members and the public. Members of the public still reference the offensive content, most recently at a PCCEP-hosted town hall on October 12th, 2022. This lack of accountability continues to damage the relationship between PPB and the community it serves. The City should be careful in balancing the competing interests of conducting a thorough investigation with the urgent need to answer public calls for accountability.

Perhaps more troubling than the lack of accountability for this incident is the lack of documented procedural changes to prevent this from happening again. In its Q2 report draft, COCL has found the city in partial compliance with Par. 84 of the agreement and calls for PPB to enforce existing Directive 1500.00 and SOP 1-21ⁱⁱ. While this is a good start, simply calling for better enforcement ignores the underlying structural barriers that led to original compliance failure. The City should be thoughtful in the design of Directive 1500.00 as it undergoes review. To ensure that compliance endures management churn and personnel turnover, systems and policies must be clear, known by all PPB members, and designed to make noncompliance an obvious aberration, rather than the default.

ii. Body-Worn Cameras

PCCEP continues to be frustrated by slow progress in the deployment of body-worn cameras and lack of community involvement in that process, despite past claims from the City that feedback would be incorporated. Notably, PCCEP was asked to host a town hall on body-worn cameras with COCL in early 2022. To date, there has been no response to the recommendations or input provided in that town hall, leaving many community members feeling used and confused. The community has repeatedly expressed a desire to be involved in body-worn camera vendor selection and policy development, yet the vendor was selected without public input, before policy development, and without PCCEP involvement. Now, many community members have concerns about the vendor the City has selected for its pilot program.

Resistance to adopt community recommendations into body-worn camera policy contributes to a perception of lack of transparency. The City and PPB's public commitment to community feedback paired with behind-the-scenes efforts to undermine accountability continues to degrade public trust.

iii. 2021 Stops Data Report Analysis

The 2021 Stops Data Collection report found that Portland police:

- Requested and performed searches of Black people during traffic stops at a higher rate than white people in identical circumstances.
- Arrested Black people during traffic stops at a higher rate than white people in identical circumstances.
- Issued citations to Hispanic or Latino people at higher rates than people of other races or ethnicities in identical circumstances.

PCCEP is concerned that the 2021 Stops Data Collection Report showed that traffic and non-traffic stops still disproportionately discriminate against non-white community members despite changes to PPB's directive. PCCEP is frustrated to be presented with these enduring trends and is eager to learn how the PPB is addressing these disparities. PCCEP plans to further discuss this data in upcoming subcommittee meetings, and is still awaiting answers to questions raised about the Report posed to PPB staff in a recent public meeting.”

IV. Conclusion

PCCEP members are cautiously optimistic about progress being made, but recognize there are still substantial barriers to a fully-operational committee, including equity issues, community engagement, and additional staff support. Moreover, PCCEP is deeply concerned about the City's longstanding abuse of community input and the perpetual lack of response to committee recommendations. In order to uphold our mission of being a "community-engaged" committee, PCCEP demands that the City take our time, knowledge, and commitment to improving public safety for all Portlanders seriously. We have laid out specific concerns in this statement, and will continue to work together to make recommendations that reflect the will of the public. It is the City's responsibility to turn those recommendations into actions.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of the Portland Committee on Community-Engaged Policing

DATED: November 9, 2022

APPROVED BY: All ten PCCEP members in attendance at the public meeting held on 11-02-22

ⁱ <https://www.oregonlive.com/crime/2022/01/portland-police-training-on-protests-ends-with-slide-showing-mock-prayer-for-dirty-hippie-prompts-investigation.html>

ⁱⁱ SOPs (defined in Directive 0060.60) are not public by default. If there is a clear remedy in SOP #1-21 that will assuage public concern, PPB should take additional steps to share that information.